

East Alaska Resource Management Plan

June 2006 Vol. 3 Issue 2

East Alaska Proposed RMP coming in June!

In June, the East Alaska Proposed RMP/Final EIS will be released to the public. This document outlines the BLM's intent for the management of 7.1 million acres of public land in Southcentral Alaska. It has been in development since 2003 and has gone through three rounds of public involvement and review.

The Proposed RMP/Final EIS contains all substantive comments received on the Draft RMP/EIS and the BLM's responses to those comments. A summary of the major changes that resulted from public involvement are outlined on page 2 of this newsletter.

The remaining timeline for this planning process includes a 30 day protest period to begin with the publishing of the Notice of Availability in the Federal Register in June. Once all protests are resolved, the BLM State Director will sign the Record of Decision, which is the document that finalizes this resource management plan. The entire process should be completed by October. All step-down plans will be consistent

with and tier off of this Resource Management plan. Fill out the interest form on the back of this newsletter and send it to the Glennallen Field Office to be kept informed of step-down plans and public involvement opportunities.

Keeping the Lines of Communication Open

The BLM continues to find ways to move forward with developing Memorandums of Understanding with local Native villages and corporations, and the State of Alaska. This effort began in support of the East Alaska RMP, but has evolved into an important coordination and information sharing tool for all aspects of land management.

The BLM currently has formal agreements with: Chickaloon Village, Cheesh'Na Tribal Council, Gakona Village, Native Village of Eyak, Chitina Traditional Indian Tribe of Alaska, Ahtna Inc., and the State of Alaska.

Do you know where this is?

This piece of public land is located within the East Alaska Planning Area. The stream is famous for greyling fishing and flows north into the Nenana River. A BLM Campground is nearby.

(Answer on page 3)



Public Comments Prompt Changes

The BLM made many changes to the Proposed RMP/ Final EIS after the analysis and consideration of public comments. Only those major changes that impact the actions described in the Proposed RMP are outlined below. Minor changes regarding text, content, and analysis can be reviewed fully in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

OHV Management

Specific trail designations for Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) use in the Delta and Gulkana Wild and Scenic River (WSR) corridors have been moved from "Implementation-level considerations" to RMP decisions. This change is based on public comment and the need to comply with the Alaska Native Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), which allows OHV use in Conservation System Units if OHVs are on designated routes (43 CFR, 36.11).

Wild and Scenic Rivers

Wild and Scenic River Suitability determination will be deferred until ANCSA and State entitlements are met. An updated discussion of the eligibility of river segments as well as the addition of Appendix (J), which outlines the Outstandingly Remarkable Values and interim management actions for each eligible river segment are included. This decision to defer suitability was based on strong public comment in support of a valid suitability assessment, something that would be a difficult task given the current interim land status.

Slana Disposal

Land disposal actions pertaining to the Slana area have been modified to state that any disposal action

taken by the BLM after disposal priorities 1 and 2 have been met will be done in close consultation with Ahtna Inc. and the Slana community. Disposals at this stage would be used to consolidate land patterns or provide lands for community infrastructure. Disposal to the general public at large by competitive or modified competitive bid will not be considered. The decision to make this change was based on overwhelming public comment opposing large-scale disposal to the public under a competitive bid system.

Public Land Order 5150

Public Land Order (PLO) 5150 will be modified to allow conveyance of approximately 83,000 acres of lands withdrawn for the transportation and utility corridor to the State of Alaska. The Trans-Alaska Pipeline does not run through this area with includes a parcel northeast of Paxson and several townships to the west of the Delta River. This change was made based on comments received from the State of Alaska. Analysis of the effects of this action have been added to Chapter IV and to the ANILCA 810 evaluation.

PLO 5150 - The Numbers

Total acres within PLO 5150: 453,000
Acres of PLO 5150 being modified: 83,000

This represents 16% of BLM-managed lands within PLO 5150 that would be available for State conveyance.

Based on annual harvest data since 1994, the average annual percent of federal subsistence harvest from the 83,000 acres that would be taken out of the federal subsistence hunt area are:

less than 10% moose harvest
less than 5% caribou harvest

This would leave a viable and accessible unit available for rural priority and federal harvest on the remainder of BLM-managed lands where the federal subsistence priority is implemented. A map of the portion of PLO 5150 that is being modified is included in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.



Step-Down Plans in Progress

Gulkana River Plan Revision

The revision of the Gulkana River Management Plan is in its final stages and should be released to the public by the end of the summer. The plan addresses human impact issues within the Gulkana WSR corridor including camp encounters, OHV use within the corridor, human waste management, and campsite impacts. The Revision will replace the current river management plan which is from 1983. will be posted on the GFO website for download.



The meandering Gulkana can be a relaxing way to spend four summer days.



The Delta River flows through rolling tundra and snowcapped mountains.

Delta River Plan Revision

Last fall, a user survey was conducted for the Delta National Wild and Scenic River Corridor. The results of that survey will help identify issues that users have with the management of the Delta WSR corridor. A revision to the 1983 River Management Plan for the Delta will be conducted beginning 2006. The

process will be similar to that just completed for the Gulkana WSR and include extensive public involvement

Trails within the Tangle Lakes Archaeological District (TLAD)

This winter, several meetings were held to talk to users about trails management within the TLAD including facilities and new trail designation and construction. More public involvement will follow through the normal NEPA process for any trail maintenance or construction project.



Users of the Swede Lake trail range from hunters, to recreational OHV riders, to moose.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) provides the basic national charter for environmental responsibility and requires the consideration and public availability of information regarding the environmental impacts of major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. NEPA analysis is done for each permit application the BLM receives and for all formal planning efforts that determine Federal actions.

Two examples of common NEPA documents that you may be asked to comment on or contribute to in a public forum are the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and the Environmental Analysis (EA). Recent NEPA documents that have been or are in the process of development by the Glennallen Field Office include the East Alaska Resource Management Plan, the Gulkana River Environmental Assessment that support the river management plan revision, and a variety of lands and realty applications for right of ways or land use.

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Stay Updated on BLM Planning!

Check the box to indicate your interest and we'll keep you informed about ways to participate in the planning process.

- ☐ Copy of East Alaska RMP
circle one: CD / Hard Copy
- ☐ Delta WSR Planning
- ☐ Trails Planning
- ☐ Commerical Use Permits
- ☐ Lands and Realty Actions
- ☐ Recreation Planning in general

Name: _____
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Communicate this information to us in whichever way is most convientent for you.



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